

Message Text

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ACTION IO-13

INFO OCT-01 AF-08 EUR-12 NEA-10 ISO-00 IOE-00 ACDA-10

ARA-10 EA-09 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-02 INR-07 L-03

NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-02 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-15 A-01

OPR-02 CAB-05 DHA-02 EB-07 SCCT-01 DOTE-00 FAA-00

USSS-00 SY-05 OC-06 CCO-00 SCA-01 VOE-00 INSE-00

AID-05 SAM-01 /165 W

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P R 081511Z JUL 76

FM USMISSION USUN NY

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 8209

INFO AMEMBASSY CAIRO

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY NAIROBI

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV

UNCLAS USUN 2803

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PFOR, UN, UG, IS

SUBJECT: WALDHEIM STATEMENT ON UGANDA RESCUE

FOLLOWING IS TEXT OF SYG WALDHEIM'S JULY 7 STATEMENT,
RELEASED BY OPI JULY 8:

QUOTE

SECRETARY-GENERAL KURT WALDHEIM ISSUED THE FOLLOWING STATEMENT
LAST NIGHT (7JULY):

THERE HAVE BEEN A NUMBER OF ERRONEOUS AND MISLEADING PRESS
REPORTS CONCERNING MY POSITION IN REGARD TO THE RECENT
HIJACKING INCIDENT INVOLVING AN AIR FRANCE AIRCRAFT AND THE
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SUBSEQUENT ISRAELI OPERATION IN ENTEBBE TO RELEASE THE

HOSTAGES.

TO CLARIFY THIS SITUATION, I AM HEREWITH SETTING FORTH A CHRONOLOGICAL ACCOUNT OF THE FACTS AND MY VIEWS CONCERNING INTERNATIONAL TERRORISM:

1. AS SOON AS I LEARNED OF THE HIJACKING ON 28 JUNE, MY SPOKESMAN MADE A STATEMENT IN LINE WITH MY LONG-STANDING POLICY OF CONDEMNING SUCH ACTS.

IT WILL BE RECALLED THAT IN SEPTEMBER 1972 I REQUESTED THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY TO INSCRIBE ON ITS AGENDA AN ITEM ENTITLED "MEASURES TO PREVENT TERRORISM AND OTHER FORMS OF VIOLENCE WHICH ENDANGER OR TAKE INNOCENT HUMAN LIVES OR JEOPARDIZE FUNDAMENTAL FREEDOMS". AT THAT TIME I STATED "I FEEL STRONGLY THAT WE IN THE UNITED NATIONS SHOULD FACE UP TO THE INTERNATIONAL ASPECTS OF THIS VERY DIFFICULT PROBLEM AND THAT, IF WE DO NOT DO SO, THE CLIMATE OF FEAR, WHICH IS ALREADY AN OMINOUS FEATURE OF OUR TIMES, WILL INEVITABLY BECOME WORSE".

SINCE THEN, I HAVE ALWAYS FIRMLY MAINTAINED THIS POSITION.

2. ON THE EVENING OF 28 JUNE I LEFT NEW YORK FOR AFRICA TO ATTEND THE ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COUNCIL MEETING IN ABIDJAN AND THE OAU SUMMIT MEETING IN MAURITIUS.

3. ON 30 JUNE, I SENT AN URGENT MESSAGE FROM ABIDJAN TO THE PRESIDENT OF UGANDA IN WHICH I EXPRESSED MY GREAT CONCERN ABOUT THE FATE OF THE HOSTAGES ON THE HIJACKED AIR FRANCE PLANE AND URGED THAT EVERY EFFORT SHOULD CONTINUE TO OBTAIN THEIR RELEASE.

4. ON 1 JULY, DURING A STOPOVER IN LUSAKA, I SENT INSTRUCTIONS TO THE UNDP RESIDENT REPRESENTATIVE IN KAMPALA TO BE HELPFUL IN ANYWAY IN THE EFFORTS TO OBTAIN THE RELEASE OF THE HOSTAGES.

5. I SENT A SECOND MESSAGE TO PRESIDENT AMIN IN THE MORNING OF 2 JULY FROM MAPUTO (MOZAMBIQUE) IN WHICH I EXPRESSED READINESS TO CONTRIBUTE IN EVERY WAY POSSIBLE TO A POSITIVE SOLUTION OF THE TRAGIC SITUATION.

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6. ON MY ARRIVAL IN MAURITIUS, LATER THE SAME DAY, I MET PRESIDENT AMIN IN THE EVENING AND DISCUSSED THE EFFORTS TO OBTAIN THE RELEASE OF THE HOSTAGES.

7. ON THE MORNING OF 3 JULY, I HELD A LONG MEETING WITH PRESIDENT AMIN DURING WHICH I REITERATED MY CONCERN ABOUT THE FATE OF THE HOSTAGES AND DISCUSSED VARIOUS WAYS IN WHICH THE

UNITED NATIONS COULD BE HELPFUL IN EFFORTS TO OBTAIN THEIR RELEASE.

IT MUST, OF COURSE, BE UNDERSTOOD THAT IN EXERCISING THE GOOD OFFICES OF THE SECRETARY-GENERAL IN SUCH DELICATE MATTERS IT IS NOT CUSTOMARY OR HELPFUL TO DISCLOSE PUBLICLY THE DETAILS OF THESE APPROACHES. HOWEVER, I KEEP INTERESTED GOVERNMENTS ADVISED OF SUCH CONTACTS AS I DID IN THIS CASE.

8. EARLY SUNDAY, 4 JULY, I WAS ADVISED FROM UNITED NATIONS HEADQUARTERS BY TELEPHONE ABOUT THE ISRAELI OPERATION AT ENTEBBE AIRPORT.

9. I LEFT MAURITIUS ON THE EVENING OF 4 JULY ON MY WAY BACK TO NEW YORK VIA EUROPE. DURING A STOPOVER AT CAIRO AIRPORT FROM 2 TO 4 A.M. LOCAL TIME, ON MONDAY 5 JULY, IN REPLY TO A QUESTION BY A CORRESPONDENT OF THE NEWSPAPER AL-AHRAM, I SAID: "I HAVEN'T GOT ALL THE DETAILS, BUT IT SEEMS TO BE CLEAR THAT ISRAELI AIRCRAFT HAVE LANDED IN ENTEBBE AND THIS CONSTITUTES A SERIOUS VIOLATION OF THE SOVEREIGNTY OF A MEMBER STATE OF THE UNITED NATIONS." (THIS TEXT IS TAKEN DIRECTLY FROM THE TAPE-RECORDING OF MY REMARKS AT CAIRO AIRPORT.)

REGRETTABLY, REUTERS IN A NEWS DESPATCH FROM CAIRO BASED ON THIS INTERVIEW, ERRONEOUSLY STATED THAT I HAD DESCRIBED THE ISRAELI OPERATION AS A "FLAGRANT AGGRESSION". THIS WAS AN OBVIOUS DISTORTION OF WHAT I HAD SAID.

10. I PROCEEDED FROM CAIRO TO FRANKFURT. ON LANDING THERE ON 5 JULY, I LEARNED OF THE MISQUOTATION WHICH HAD BEEN ATTRIBUTED TO ME BY REUTERS. I IMMEDIATELY DENIED IT CATEGORICALLY AND AUTHORIZED ISSUANCE OF A FORMAL STATEMENT TO THAT EFFECT.
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11. ON 5 JULY, I ALSO EXPRESSED MY SATISFACTION THAT IT HAD PROVED POSSIBLE TO SAVE THE LIVES OF THE HOSTAGES WHO HAD BEEN DETAINED AT ENTEBBE AIRPORT WHILE EXPRESSING MY REGRET AT THE LOSS OF LIFE OF SOME OF THE HOSTAGES AND THE UGANDAN NATIONALS WHO WERE KILLED DURING THE OPERATION.

12. ALSO ON 5 JULY, I RECEIVED A MESSAGE FROM THE DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER AND FOREIGN MINISTER OF ISRAEL, IN WHICH, WHILE INFORMING ME OF THE ISRAELI OPERATION, HE THANKED ME ON BEHALF OF THE ISRAELI GOVERNMENT FOR ALL MY OWN EFFORTS REGARDING THE HOSTAGES. SIMILAR EXPRESSIONS OF APPRECIATION WERE CONVEYED TO ME BY OTHER CONCERNED GOVERNMENTS.

13. ON 6 JULY, REUTERS ITSELF, ON THE BASIS OF THE TAPE-

RECORDING OF MY STATEMENT IN CAIRO, ISSUED A CORRECTION IN WHICH
IT SAID:

" MR. WALDHEIM WAS ERRONEOUSLY QUOTED IN ARABIC HERE YESTERDAY
BY THE EGYPTIAN MIDDLE EAST NEWS AGENCY (MENA) AS SAYING THE RAID
WAS A FLAGRANT AGGRESSION. MENA'S REPORT WAS TRANSLATED BACK
INTO ENGLISH BY REUTERS AND DISTRIBUTED WORLD-WIDE."

THE REUTERS MANAGEMENT HAS ALSO CONVEYED TO ME A
PERSONAL APOLOGY.

14. I HOPE THAT THE ABOVE STATEMENT OF FACTS WILL CLARIFY
MY VIEWS ON THE RECENT INCIDENT AND MY EFFORTS IN REGARD TO
OBTAINING THE RELEASE OF THE HOSTAGES.

I WISH TO CONCLUDE BY EMPHASIZING THAT THIS TRAGIC INCIDENT
UNDERLINES THE URGENCY OF THE WORLD COMMUNITY FINDING
EFFECTIVE WAYS OF DEALING WITH THE
INCREASINGLY PERVASIVE AND PERNICIOUS PRACTICE OF
INTERNATIONAL TERRORISM.

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